

Message Text

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SUBJ: JUNE 17-18 LOCAL ELECTIONS

REF : ROME 5335

BEGIN SUMMARY:

1. REGIONAL COUNCIL VOTE IN FRIULI- VENEZIA GIULIA WAS MAIN FEATURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS HELD JUNE 17-18. COMPARED WITH NATIONAL ELECTIONS OF 1972, MSI DID NOT QUITE HOLD ITS OWN. DEMOCRATIC PARTIES AS A WHOLE GAINED, BUT CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS LOST. END SUMMARY.

2. CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC) DROPPED TO 39.7 PERCENT FROM 53.2 PRCENT IN 1972 AND 44.9 PERCENT IN 1968 REGIONAL ELECTIONS. THE DC' S LOSSES REFLECT SHIFT OF SIZEABLE LINGUISTIC MINORITY GROUPS VOTE WHICH WENT TO DC IN 1972 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS BUT TO ETHNIC PARTIES JUNE 17-18. DC LOSS IS EXAGGERATED, IN COMPARISON WITH 1968, BY FACT THAT IN 1968 REGIONAL BAL- LOTING, DC PROFITED FROM NEGLIGENCE OF THEN- UNIFED SOCIALIST PARTY (PSI AND PSDI) WHICH DID NOT GET ON BALLOT IN UDINE. PART OF VOTE WHICH WENT TO DC IN 1968, THEREFORE, RETURNED TO PSDI AND PSI THIS TIME AROUND.

3. BIGGEST WINNERS WERE SOCIALISTS (PSI) WHO, WITH 12.2
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PERCENT OF THE VOTE AND 8 SEATS, EVIDENTLY WON LION' S SHARE OF NOW- DEFUNCT SOCIAL PROLETARIAN (PSIUP) VOTE. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AT 8.7 PERCENT MAINTAINED PARTY' S PREVIOUS POSITIONS. REPUBLICAN PARTY MAINTAINED PREEXISTING LEVEL AT 2.7 PERCENT. LIBERALS (PLI) CONTINUED RECENT DOWNWARD TREND TO 3.6 PERCENT FROM 4.2 PERCENT IN 1972 AND 4.9 PERCENT IN 1968.

4. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE PCI DID NOT PICK UP THE FORMER VOTES OF THE PSIUP -- A PARTY ABSORBED BY THE PCI LAST YEAR. THUS, WHILE THE PCI GAINED SLIGHTLY IN 1973 (20.9 PERCENT) OVER ITS 1968 (20.1 PERCENT) AND 1972 (20.2 PERCENT) PERFORMANCE, THE TOTAL FAR- LEFT VOTE (PCI) AND PSIUP) DROPPED FROM 24.8 PERCENT IN THE 1968 REGIONAL ELECTIONS TO THE CURRENT 20.9 PERCENT LEVEL.

5. FAR- RIGHT MSI AT 7.5 PERCENT HELD CLOSE TO THE 7.7 PERCENT IT POLLED IN 1972 ELECTIONS AND IMPROVED ON ITS 5.6 PERCENT IN 1968. AS ALWAYS, MSI DID RELATIVELY WELL IN TRIESTE WHERE IT POLLED NEARLY 13 PERCENT OF THE VOTE.

6. JUNE 17-18 ELECTIONS IN 13 TOWNS WHICH VOTED UNDER PROPORTIONAL SYSTEM GENERALLY CONFIRMED TREND SET IN FRIULI- VENEZIA GIULIA, WITH SLIGHTLY MORE FAVORABLE SHOWING FOR LARGER PARTIES (DC AND PCI).

7. COMMENT: JUNE 17-18 ELECTION RESULTS, GENERALLY FAVORING LAY- PARTY MEMBERS OF FORMER CENTER- LEFT COALITION AND WITH " ACCEPTABLE" LEVEL OF DC LOSSES, SHOULD ENCOURAGE CURRENT MOVEMENT TOWARD NEW CENTER- LEFT. VOLPE

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